

Division of Emergency Medical Services



2002 Annual Report to the King County Council

September 2002

Acknowledgements:

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Preface

I am pleased to present the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division 2002 Annual Report to the King County Council. The overall purpose of the report is to summarize the status of the regional EMS system, provide an overview of EMS Division programs and activities, report on the status and impact of the EMS Strategic Initiatives, and update the status of the EMS financial plan and EMS levy fund.

It is especially noteworthy and commendable this year to recognize that all 12 EMS Strategic Initiatives identified in the six year 1998-2003 EMS Strategic Plan have been addressed with significant result. Programs have been fully developed and implemented, with final evaluation of their impact either complete or underway. The EMS Strategic Plan was originally written in 1996 by a committee representing the full range of regional EMS providers, including physicians, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, fire departments, labor, health plans, Public Health - Seattle & King County, private ambulance companies, and fire commissioners. It was approved by the King County Council and used as the basis for the 1998-2003 levy period.

The EMS Strategic Plan set additional policies, establishing new strategic directions aimed at managing the rate of growth in demand, using existing resources more efficiently, and enhancing current programs and adding new programs to meet emerging community needs. Most importantly, the Strategic Plan provided major policy direction for the EMS Division and the regional EMS system.

Completion of the Strategic Initiatives has been a truly regional enterprise, one that has required the full participation and collaboration of fire departments, paramedic providers, dispatch centers, EMS Medical Directors, the EMS Advisory Committee, and the EMS Division. These agencies should be proud of their achievements and collaborative efforts in making such substantial progress on the Strategic Initiatives. Their success reflects the vital working relationship that provides effective out-of-hospital medical care, every day, to the citizens of King County.

I would also recommend that readers pay particular attention to the section detailing the EMS Division activities to get a sense of the richness and variety of programs carried out by the division. Every year the EMS Division selects topics for data analysis in the Annual Report. This year those highlighted topics include Mental Health Incidents, Citizen CPR and Drug Overdoses, and a comparison of medical procedures performed by EMTs and paramedics.

The EMS 2002 Division Annual Report is available online through the Public Health - Seattle & King County website located at the following address: (www.metrokc.gov/health/ems).

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Public Health - Seattle & King County

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Commonly Used Acronyms:

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
Advanced Life Support (ALS)
Basic Life Support (BLS)
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)